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tion, he would at least be able to say: *Il fait chaud*, whether circumstances warranted such a statement or not.

The author's hope that an extended experience in the use of the English tongue has peculiarly fitted him for the English part of the work has, in most cases, been realized.

The book has some good qualities, and will undoubtedly do much in the line of French conversation. By the use of fine paper, clean type, good press-work and binding, it has been made attractive and pleasing to the eye.

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A Handbook to the Land Charters and other Saxon Documents. By JOHN EARLE. M. A., Oxford. At the Clarendon Press, 1888, 8vo. pp. cxi, 519.

What BISHOP STUBBS has done for the laws of early England in his book of 'Select Charters,' MR. EARLE has done for the land charters and wills in this valuable hand-book. The introduction is divided into three parts, the first being an elaboration of the form and structural characteristics of the land charters, of which the discussions of the grant, date and signature are especially full and valuable; the second puts forth a new theory regarding the conversion of the free village community into the feudal manor, which is the most important ray of light in this dark field since the publication of MR. SEEBOHM'S 'English Village Community' in 1883; the third treats of the two languages employed in the documents, with special reference to the English and Latin orthography. The body of the work is made up of about three hundred charters and wills, divided into two parts, primary and secondary documents, the latter being subdivided into fifteen groups, beginning with those in single parchments not contemporary with the date of the manuscripts wherein found, though none are later than the eleventh century, and closing with specimens of the rimed charters in manuscripts of the fifteenth century. In an appendix is printed, chiefly for its glossarial value, an important charter of EADGAR (972), following which are twenty-five pages of comments and annotations additional to those given in the body of the book, and a glossary

with page references. Such indexing has never before been attempted, though the number in the way here treated is small in comparison with the whole body—between two and three thousand—of extant charters. Although MR. EARLE includes no hitherto unprinted documents, yet a few have previously appeared only in the *Archæological Journal*. In this collection there can be found all that are chiefly important for the study of the social and economical institutions of England. Previous to this it has been necessary to search the volumes of KEMBLE'S 'Codex Diplomaticus,' THORPE'S 'Diplomatarium Anglicum,' or the unfinished publication of W. DE GRAY BIRCH. In this 'Handbook' each charter is arranged in chronological order with a good index, prefaced by an argument and followed by explanatory notes. A few of the important all-Saxon documents are translated.

The attention of the philologist is drawn to the charters as a neglected source of lexicographical material, particularly of the descriptive nature found in the Saxon perambulations. In these and in the all-Saxon charters the vernacular types are Kentish and West Saxon; the former traceable to 934, the latter falling into two periods represented by the names of ÆLFRED and ÆLFRIC. A number of words neglected by or unknown to previous compilers, are to be found; such as *rôd*, a clearing in the forest, modern *road* (though MR. HENRY BRADLEY considers this to be the same as *rôd*, modern *rood*), *ánstig*, *hán*, *bula* and others. Discussion is renewed and much light thrown on the meaning of many topographical words, as *crundel* (p. 471), *mearc* (pp. 454-6), *hid*, (lii, liii, and 457-460), *stoc*, (463-5), *lacu* (465), *stapol* (466), *brytæn-walda* (473), *furh*, fir-tree (474, thus disproving CAESAR'S statement, 'B. G.' v, 12, "*praeter fagum atque abietem*").

To the historical student special interest will centre in the second part of MR. EARLE'S introduction. He rejects, as do all special students in this field, MR. KEMBLE'S Mark theory, and also condemns MR. SEEBOHM'S theory in its present shape, as "surrounded with an atmosphere of improbability" (p. lxi). He prefers to take the natural ground of the conservative scholar and accepts the free village community,

but places beside it and in "a kind of presidential authority" over it a lord, who had his separate estate of slaves and tenants as in later times. This composite institution finds its origin in the nature of the military settlement, where the land distribution was conformed to the composition of the army into "Hundreds" (twelve tens) and "Hyndens" (tens), and the head of these army divisions became the head of each local settlement, the ancestor of the lord of the manor. In this MR. EARLE is nearer right than any who have gone before. The "overgrown-ceorl" theory has always had its doubters, and the "servile origin" theory is equally extreme and leaves out of consideration too many important free elements. When, however, MR. EARLE attempts to apply his theory and to find a class to whom to assign this military leadership, the difficulties begin. The only persons to occupy such a position are either the *eorl*, *gesið*, or the head of a *mægð*, or kindred groups. The *eorl* is assumed as the first name applied to such a leader, which term, however, soon dropped out of use, and remained only as a word in epic poetry (p. lxxi). Then to this official was given the name *gesið*. SCHMID had recognized the fact that the *gesið* was an officer of equal importance with the *pegn* (see glossary), but gave a different interpretation to his office, perhaps on account of the very absence of the historical question. First, says MR. EARLE, we have the *eorl*, mentioned in the laws of ÆTHELBIRHT; next the *gesið*, in the laws of WIHTRÆD and INE; and then there steps into the same office the *pegn*; followed in post-Saxon times by the knight, squire and gentleman each after the *eorl*, the legitimate successor of the one before in the position as lord of the manor. This explains perfectly the origin of the *pegn* and the fact of the existence of manors in the earliest extant documents. The existence of free townships in the country without such leaders, or *pegnas*, is explained as a later severing of free ceorls, "planted without circumstances of war." Such are found in 'Domesday' (i 41, b) at Alwarstake in Hampshire, at Melebroc (Millbrook) and at Iftthorpe (*Antiquary*, February, 1888). But in connection with the *gesið* there are one or two points of difficulty. He was a

dependent and on some one else than the king, (*dryhten*, WIHTRÆD, 5; *hlaforð*, INE, 50) MR. EARLE says, *hundredes ealdor* (lxii); it is possible, but if so, the latter is nowhere else so called, and MR. EARLE himself acknowledges that this is the "real difficulty" of the problem (lxxvi). This dependence is emphasized in INE, 68, which declares that if a *gesiðcund* man be driven away it must be from his *bottl*, not his *setene*, the former being the same term used as for the dwelling of a *gebûr*. The evidence is too slight to warrant the statement that "in every township there is a *gesið*" (lxviii), for but one law (INE, 30), and that obscure, is the basis of this generalization. The Angles and Saxons came to England *en masse*, bringing their wives and children with them not as an army, and the family conditions of the continent were undoubtedly preserved by them; the family law of the Anglo-Saxons was essentially the same as that of the German tribes. The mutual guarantee of the *mægð* and its use by the state as a police organization, is opposed to the idea of the *gesið* as a police officer (lxx). We are to suppose that the settlers formed in battle according to the distinction of tribes and families, each with its leader. Was such a leader an appointed *eorl* or *gesið*? or was he the natural head of such a kindred or family? This may be made to harmonize with MR. EARLE'S view, certainly with MR. KEMBLE'S, that "some kind of military organizations preceded the peaceful settlement, and in many respects determined its mode and character." But these criticisms are only to show that new light and a further critical examination of this interesting subject are needed. The problem has entered a new phase and we believe the solution to be not far distant.

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L'Avare, comédie en cinq actes. Par MOLIERE.

With profuse historical, philological, idiomatical and descriptive notes by SHELE DE VERE. New York: W. R. Jenkins. 1888. pp. vii, 161.

Mr. Jenkins, who has earned the thanks of all American students and teachers of French by his neat and cheap reprints of representa-